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ABSTRACT

The working of the educational system in a welfare state was examined in a longitudinal study of a cohort (initially 1,029) of students followed from age 7 to age 23 years. An initial sample included 329 males and 342 females, of whom 352 had working class careers and 319 had middle class careers. Relationships among social origin, gender, and career were analyzed; school performance, differentiation, and careers were determined for a final sample of 655 young adults. Social background had a heavy impact on career. Two-thirds of the working class children remained in a working class career, and two-thirds of the middle class children stayed in the middle class. Working class children were more likely to remain in the same career position, with less shifts of class position, than were middle class children. Class position shifts were also more common among women than men. In primary schools, differences in cognitive performance among students increased and students followed different career paths. Student perspectives on schooling in retrospect indicated more school acceptance among middle class students and among those with middle class careers. The results highlight the need to view the impact of the educational system in terms of cultural responses and social mobility in the welfare state. Three tables and two diagrams present study data. A 53-item list of references is included. (SLD)

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CAREERS AND PERSPECTIVES ON SCHOOLING IN THE WELFARE STATE:

A longitudinal study on students' origin, destiny, and experiences of schooling.

Paper presented at the 1990 AERA meeting
in Boston April 16-20, 1990

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Resumen

Lindblad, S. y Pérez Prieto, H. (1990): **Trayectorias y perspectivas sobre educación en el Estado de Bienestar. Un estudio longitudinal acerca del origen y destino social de los alumnos y de sus experiencias educacionales.**

El significado de la educación, y del origen y destino social de los alumnos en una sociedad de bienestar es el objeto de estudio de una investigación longitudinal realizada en una ciudad sueca. Una cohorte de 1029 alumnos es seguida desde que comienza la escuela a la edad de 7 anos hasta su ingreso al mercado del trabajo (23 anos de edad). Diferentes trayectorias escolares son construídas como expresión del proceso diferenciador, de selección y mobilidad social del sistema educacional. El origen social de los alumnos es aquí de significativa importancia para su trayectoria escolar. A continuación son analizados los resultados adquiridos en diferentes pruebas y tests durante la escuela primaria y la visión retrospectiva de los alumnos sobre su paso por la escuela en relación a esas trayectorias. Se argumenta que el sistema educacional tiene una tendencia doble de homogenización y de diferenciación entre esas carreras. De tal manera la mobilidad social se muestra empíricamente relacionada con los resultados escolares y con las perspectivas hacia la escuela. El proceso educativo aumenta más que disminuye las diferencias escolares. Una visión retrospectiva de acceptación o de rechazo a la educación se muestra más fuertemente relacionada con la trayectoria escolar y la posición alcanzada en la estructura social que con el origen social de los alumnos. En base a estos resultados se discute el impacto del sistema educacional en términos de respuestas culturales a exigencias institucionales y estructurales, y de mobilidad social en el estado de bienestar.

INTRODUCTION

For several decades Sweden has evidenced aspects of a modern welfare state where education has been regarded as an instrument to obtain a more fair and equal society. At the same time education has had the function of selecting, qualifying, and socializing generations of youngsters into a social structure based on private property and vertical division of labour. What are the outcomes of such conditions for education and what does education mean for different social classes in a welfare society? In the research project 'Schooling In Retrospect' we are working with such issues.* Our ambitions are to integrate longitudinal quantitative studies of a group of children growing up in a medium-sized Swedish community with qualitative studies of their life stories (Bertaux, 1981) and 'lived curricula' in order to describe and explain the working of a developed educational system in a welfare state. This paper is a product from the quantitative analyses in our work.

BACKGROUND

Sweden has changed dramatically during the last century; from an agricultural to an industrialized society with an increasing amount of workers and servants; from an underdeveloped to a wealthy nation

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with a highly organized working class and with very high labour productivity. As Korpi (1978) points out, Sweden has been conceived of as the prototype for a Modern Welfare Society to many observers.[1]

On educational reforms in Sweden:

The educational system in Sweden has been reformed several times after the second world war. The compulsory comprehensive (primary and lower secondary for the ages of 7 - 15 years) school was implemented in the 1960s, the upper secondary school (ages 16-18 years) - where vocational training courses were integrated - in the 1970s. About 90 - 95 percent of students in a class continue to the upper secondary school. During the 1970s higher education was changed as well. Broadly speaking, the educational system expanded to a large extent, and the reforms intended to increase the equality and equity of education as a "spear head" towards a reformed society of the future.[2]

It can be argued - based on a study by Kallós & Lundgren (1977) that these reforms were largely organizational in character. The content and the internal workings of the comprehensive school showed large

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[1] Korpi (1978), p 15). Korpi points out - as well - that Sweden is a capitalistic welfare state which combines a capitalist economic system with extensive political measures in order to counteract deficiencies in this system and to reallocate resources according to principles of justice.

[2] The political discussions and the administrative measures are described by Marklund (1980) and Richardson (1978).

similarities with the former school system which was based on organizational differentiation from grade 4 or 7. A basic question in the reform debate concerned differentiation in the school system in relation to the pupils' development and the demands for dividing them for pedagogical and economic reasons. Within an educational system differentiation might be carried through in different ways. Often we find organizational differentiation where the pupils are distributed over different schools or classes after some principle (e g money, ability, career decisions). This can be complemented or replaced by a pedagogical differentiation in the classroom - e g by teaching-learning materials, individualized tasks and treatment. Callewaert & Nilsson (1980) analysed the teaching process in the Swedish comprehensive school from such a point of view - the school class as a social system. And Lundgren (1974) described different pedagogical roles in the classroom. Based on such considerations we have to consider the impact of pedagogical differentiation when we consider the process and outcomes of the comprehensive school.

The relations between living conditions and schooling became obvious when differences in socioeconomic recruitment and in the composition of pupils between different schools are considered. The social segregation of living had an impact on schooling as is shown by studies of Arnman & Jönsson (1985) and Lundman (1980) which furthermore is underlined by investigations between different school codes (Arfwedson, 1983). Such concrete aspects of material and cultural differences between schools are often disregarded in abstract statistical analyses of education.

Empirical studies have shown that working-class children have gained relatively little from the reforms, and that the distribution of youth in different programmes based on their own decisions has been about the same as the earlier distribution based on the decisions of the school.[3] On the other hand - in absolute numbers more working-class children have achieved more years in education than earlier and for a rather large number there is social mobility between the generations.[4]

Theoretical Considerations:

Development and reform of education has been advocated from different points of departure.[5] What are now labelled 'liberal theories of education' (by Giroux, 1983) have been challenged in different ways. Empirical studies have questioned the rhetoric of school reforms.[6] Such findings as those presented above have been taken as verification of so-called reproduction theories, where a basic assumption is that education is a question of iteration of the social structure and distribution of power - connected with the logic of capital or of

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[3] See Gesser, 1985, Härnqvist, 1978 and Jonsson, 1988.

[4] The social mobility has perhaps increased in this century as is showed by Jonsson, 1988. And in comparision with studies on a cohort born more than 30 years earlier made by Husén, Emanuelsson & Fägerlind (1969) there has been significant changes in educational opportunity.

[5] Cf Paulston, 1977.

[6] See note 2 and Halsey, Heath & Ridge (1980) for some examples.

symbolic violence. The organization of the work at school and/or the impact of this work in terms of socialization or of ideological transmission was regarded as functional for the (perhaps expanded) reproduction of relations between social classes.[7] This reproduction is explained in different ways - e g as systematic oppression, as the sum of unintended consequences, or as something occurring behind the backs of the actors in the game of education. Such explanations based on a sociological reductionism have in turn been questioned in different ways.[8] The process behind the described outcomes then came into focus, as did the actors and their intentions and actions. However, this might lead to a decontextualized and ahistorical conception of educational phenomena which we think would decrease the possibilities of understanding why these phenomena occur and what they mean.[9]

Cultural Studies:

From our point of view so-called 'cultural studies' which sought cultural solutions to structurally imposed problem complexes are of considerable interest. In education Paul Willis' (1977) study of a small group of working-class boys has been regarded as an alternative to more macro-oriented studies of the flow of cohorts through education as well as to more ahistorical interactionist studies. It

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[7] E g Bowles & Gintis (1976). Yates (1986) gives an overview of such theorizing and relates it to questions of gender and ethnicity in education.

[8] E g Gambetta (1987) and Giroux (1983). Di Tomaso (1982) presents some principal traits in such reductionism from Parsons to Althusser.

[9] C f Hurn, 1976.

gave insights into a rationality of working-class reproduction. But Willis' study had some limitations from our point of view. It was done within rather a narrow time span (e g in a secondary school) with a very small group of specific boys making rather spectacular resistance to the dominating school culture.[10] We will here discuss this in relation to (an) alternative cultural responses related to class and gender, (b) an extended time span in terms of trajectories or careers, and (c) the relations between differentiation in school and careers into the social structure.

Social Class, Gender and Different Cultural Responses:

The focus on specific subcultures within a certain social class is often linked with a systematic lack of interest in those within the same class who do not belong to the current subculture. From this might follow a neglect of alternative cultural responses and strategies and overly bold conclusions concerning the relation between class and subculture (cf Hargreaves, 1982, Walker, 1985, Brown, 1987). Murdock & McCron (1981, p 25) have pointed out:

> "The problem is not only to explain why styles such as the mods or the skinheads developed within particular class strata at the times and in the forms that they did, but also to explain why adolescents in essentially the same basic class location adopted other modes of negotiation and resolution. This question can only be answered by going beyond general characterizations of class location and examining the detailed variations in the mediations of class within specific work and non-work situations." (1981, p. 25).

The study by Brown (1987) has taken such arguments in consideration.

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[10] In addition, to us the relation between theory and outcomes is sometimes problematic in his study.

Brown stresses the realism in the perspectives and strategies among ordinary working-class kids - who appeared as the conformists or as renegades in Willis' study. To Brown the accommodations among the ordinary kids to the dominating school culture is an effort to obtain control over their lives and to pursue a worker's career after school. And Aggleton (1987) presents another aspect of subcultures when studying rebels within the middle class and their ways of dealing with education and life careers. Their class origin is different from the lads in Willis' study, as are the implications of their conflicting responses to school in terms of future careers.

Another criticism of Willis' study came from a feminist perspective (e g Mac Robbie, 1978) pointing to the fact that working-class girls and their perspectives were almost invisible, an indictment Willis can share with many other studies in education.[11] The distinctions between male and female in education and the relations between gender and class seems to be a pregnant area for educational research. Here, we might talk about the complementary working of different logics. The same consideration could be taken in relation to immigration and ethnicity.[12] Though we here concentrate on social classes, we will consider the gender issue in our studies. Referring to ethnicity and related issues, Sweden is rather specific. We will make some comments

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[11] E g Yates, 1986.

[12] The complex relations between class, gender and ethnicity is a challenge for studies in education (cf Grant & Sleeter, 1986). However, it does not seem reasonable that every researcher should deal with all these aspects all the time. In our research group we have done some specialisation. Käller (1990) has developed a gender perspective and Mardones Hernández (1990) is focussing on issues of ethnicity in our common longitudinal study.

on this in our empirical studies, but will postpone more detailed analyses.

The Extended Time Span - Classes and Careers:

Based on considerations such as those presented above it seemed to be of value to study a whole cohort of youth during a longer time span in order to describe their careers in terms of selection of different educational programmes and kinds of work. The concept of career is here treated as a sequence of positions in the social class structure. As was shown above, the concept of culture is a bit problematic in research on education. The same holds true for the concept of class. Is it linked to social stratification, status, or class structure in terms of consumption or production? In the present study we use a class concept derived from Therborn (1971) based on conceptions of economic exploitation and based on types of occupation and the organizational history of unions. Our reasons are pragmatic. Since we are dealing with combinations of positions over time we would get too complex an outcome if we used more elaborated class structures. Thus, at present we have to use very simple categories. We assume that the distinction between working-class positions (production and service workers and students in programmes for such positions) and middle-class positions (middle strata, petty bourgeoisie, and students aspiring to such positions) is of vital interest when dealing with education and careers in society. In relation to this assumption two comments must be made. First, the working and the middle class and the relations between them are just a part of the structure of social classes, but a part where education

could be regarded as important when refilling the positions in this structure. And second, we are here focussing on the 'vertical' dimension of social classes, related to the structure of occupations; a 'horizontal' dimension - where we find relations between different segments in society - is of vital importance as well. However, in this paper only the vertical dimension is in focus.[13] A career - educational and vocational - is consequently regarded as achieved vertical positions in the class structure over time.

In the present study we deal with outcomes of education in terms of careers in education and work in Sweden and in the distribution of individuals over these careers. We stress connections between educational choices and careers and positions in the class structure of the society (cf the analyses by Baudelot & Establet, 1975). Thus, making individual decisions about educational alternatives is an action that - in combination with other events has a (re)structuring impact. Such actions will presumably have an impact on the reprinting and contestation of the social structure - as presented in theories of social mobility and reproduction.

The Experience of Schooling: Differentiation and Careers:

In schools pupils face a number of intended and unintended experiences in situations which are often very complex and filled with evaluative remarks. Here they develop different strategies and counterstrategies relative to teachers and fellow pupils. They learn

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[13] Later analyses will use other classifications as SEI (Socio-Economic Indexation) and Classifications of Occupations (NYK) to deal with the horizontal dimensions.

about the world and they learn about themselves. The experiences of schooling are here assumed to be linked to the way the differentiation between the pupils is effected by the school. Here, it seems reasonable to link careers with the differentiation in school as a preparation for career decision making and selection. In the way differentiation works we will recognize the relations between education and the social and economic structure as well the intersection between individuals with specific characteristics and the school as an organized institution.

Of specific concern here is the concept of pedagogical differentiation as reflected in variations in performances within an organizationally undifferentiated educational system in the Swedish comprehensive school. What is of interest is not so much isolated performances, but rather time series that show development trends. Such trends will tell us about experiences from schooling in two ways : in relation to learning knowledge and skills and in relation to learning how one's own person, gender, culture and/or class is treated. It is the second respect that is in focus in our study. Here we can turn to Kerckhoff (1986) who stresses the perspective of life-course analysis:

> It attempts to view the trajectory of an individual's life as a whole, as a patterned sequence of steps or stages or events. (a a, p. 108)

He underlines the importance of identifying "times of divergence, a point where 'alternate tracks' are taken". The school is a place

where you are judged and treated in different ways. How is this related to your future career? Here, it seems fruitful to assume that different schools might work in different ways (eg Mortimer et al, 1987, on "school matters" and Willis, 1977, on the impact of social background related to school intakes) and that such differences lead to different responses among the pupils. Such responses may have an impact on their future careers as well as on their experiences of schooling.

Careers and Perspectives on Schooling in Retrospect:

We will penetrate how persons with different careers perceive their school experiences in retrospect. As a starting point we are using one result of Willis' (op cit) study - where he presents a dominating "school paradigm" and different cultural responses to this paradigm in terms of acceptance of this paradigm or resistance against it. The resistance responses are in turn derived from working-class cultures and serve as an explanation of the way in which working-class kids get working-class jobs. We here use the concept of "perspective" instead of response, since we are focussing on different "maps of meaning" rather than on behaviour and style. Such a perspective is regarded as a result of their background and careers - i e it will tell us about the impact of the interaction between the pupils and the school in combination with their careers after they finished school. Here, we ask ourselves what their different careers and experiences of schooling will mean for their conception of education in the welfare state? This is not an insignificant question for education in a democratic society - an institution under increasing

constraints.[14]

To what extent can we identify empirical relations between perspectives on schooling and different origins and careers? This we think is a way to deal with issues involving social mobility and cultural identity for classes in a welfare society. If we assume that there are different cultures in the society; how do persons from different cultures relate to school and what do the schooling experiences mean for those who have followed different careers and who look upon school from diverse positions. The relations between social origin, career, development in school and perspectives on schooling will tell us something about the impact of education and the meaning of schooling in the welfare state.

QUESTIONS:

In this paper we will try to present preliminary answers to the following specific questions:

(1) What careers - in terms of positions in the class structure - can we identify so far for the cohort - and how are the individuals distributed over the different careers in terms of social background and gender ?

[14] The conficence in the educational system has decreased among the parents between 1969 and 1988 as is shown in a recent study by the National Board of Education (SÖ, 1988).

Here we assume that we will find relations between social background and career. Thus, we will expect that working-class kids more frequently will turn to working-class jobs.

> (2) How are careers related to differentiation within an integrated school - how does the pedagogical differentiation work in relation to careers? Can we find differences between schools and classes here?

The pedagogical differentiation process occurs before the careers are manifested in career decisions and organizational differentiation. We may expect a correspondence between this process and later careers. But what are the relations to different social backgrounds and to gender?

> (3) To what extent can we identify perspectives of resistance and of adjustment to the dominating school paradigm in retrospect? Are there empirical links between perspectives, careers, and differentiation in schools?

Based on Willis (op cit) we are expecting a resistance perspective more frequently among the working class. But what does their origin mean in relation to their career? And how are perspectives on schooling related to gender?

METHODS

From a cultural perspective one often turns to qualitative studies, mostly of ethnographic character. As Burgess (1985) and others have pointed out, the issue of research approach is dependent on the problem in focus. And going back to classical studies in the social sciences we find combinations of qualitative and quantitative studies on the phenomenon in focus. In this study we have turned to quantitative methods - using performance tests, questionnaires etc for gathering data - and statistical analyses of these data in order to get answers to our questions.

The careers:

The longitudinal study is based on a previous study concerning the effects of learning English as early as grade 1 in the comprehensive school. All beginners (a bit over 1 000 subjects) in a medium-sized Swedish town participated from grade 1 to grade 9 in a number of investigations in the 1970s. They were then followed up in two further waves during the 1980s. We are using the data base in order to construct different careers and to describe the distribution over careers. We will compare the different careers - their recruitment and consequences. A starting point is the social origin of the pupils. This is complemented with information about the pupils' positions on three different occasions:

> 1980: After the completion of the comprehensive school, when the vast majority continued to upper secondary school and only about 10 % started work.

1984: When most individuals had finished their upper secondary schooling - 25 % had entered higher education and about 60 % were working.

1986: Information about their careers from a follow-up study. At that time about 25 % were studying and 70 % were working.

The relations between social background, gender, and career are analysed by means of cross tabulations and chi2-tests.

School performance:

School performance was measured by different tests during the primary school (grade 1 - 6) where no organizational differentiation was present in the school. We used tests in Swedish, Mathematics, and Intelligence (School Readiness Test and DBA - Differential Aptitude Analysis) as indications of what is regarded as knowledge and intellectual skills. For a detailed presentation, see Holmstrand (1982). The development of the differentiation is presented in diagrams based on standardized scores (mean = 0 and deviation = 1) for the tests in focus. The statistical analyses were done by means of covariance where scores in grade six are the dependent variable "predicted" by scores in grade one in combination with divisions in background, career, gender, and school.[15]

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[15] We will not go into detail in our use of statistical analyses here. The data about the dependent variables (IQ tests, performance tests etc) were considered to be of interval scale type. Here covariance analyses were performed by means of a SAS GLM procedure - a method of least squares to fit linear models. The model was constructed like this: predicted performance in grade 6 = classes (social background, career, gender, school) and as covariate performance in grade 1 in the same field. Interaction between social background, career and gender was analyzed in relation to the model. Differences between class variables was conducted by a least square means procedure. (SAS User's Guide:

Perspectives:

The latest follow up study (1986) will show us different perspectives on the schooling experiences in retrospect. This study was performed as a survey with an answer ratio a bit above 70 %, without any systematic bias according to class, gender, and earlier attitudes towards the school. The perspectives were constructed as scales using a number of questions that were assumed to catch different aspects of how the earlier pupils relate themselves to the dominating paradigm of teaching according to Willis as presented above.[16] By this we think that we will get pictures of the schooling experiences in terms on resistance or acceptance perspectives on schooling. The aspects as scales with the expected directions in agreement are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: The different aspects of the perspective of schooling from a resistance/acceptance point of view.

Aspects	Resistance - - - - - Acceptance	
Friends and fun	+	-
School is unfair	+	-
Active Participation	-	+
Strategic behaviour	-	+
Not all work instrumental	-	+

For a further presentation, see Pérez, 1989.

Statistics. Version 6 Edition, pp 571 - 600. 1987).

[16] Perspectives on schooling was considered to be of ordinal scale type. The data were here crosstabulated and interaction effects were considered.

RESULTS:

Background, gender and career:

The information is condensed in terms of social origin, gender and career. Origin is defined by parents' class position and career by the position held at the last occasion. In table 1 we can see to what extent the subjects have left or stayed in their social origin as shown in table 1:

Table 1: Social Origin, Gender and Career. Numbers and percent.

	SOCIAL ORIGIN											
	WORKING CLASS				MIDDLE CLASS				TOTAL			
	MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE		MALE		FEMALE	
CAREER	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Working Class Career	95	67	108	67	80	43	69	39	175	53	177	53
Middle Class Career	47	33	54	33	107	57	111	61	154	47	165	48
Total	142	100	162	100	187	100	180	100	329	100	342	100

At this stage of their life - when they are 23 years old - slightly more than 50 percent hold a middle-class position in their career. Later on we would expect this share to decrease. Table 1 shows that there is an empirical correlation between social background and career. Working-class children have one chance in three to become working-class leavers, i e to pursue a middle-class career. The reverse chance almost holds true for middle-class children, who have

almost two chances out of three to become middle-class stayers.[17] There seems to be little differences between males and females in the distribution over careers. However, since we have information about the subjects' careers over a number of years we can be a bit more detailed: We can distinguish between Direct Careers - where the subjects hold the same positions during the three occasions in focus and Serpentine Careers - where they change position at least once. (We are not dealing with relations between social background and career here.) We find that working-class children in more than 80 percent of the cases are pursuing direct careers, while middle-class children in almost 40 percent of the cases have serpentine careers. And females are more frequent (30 %) in serpentine careers in comparison with men (20 %).[18] It is often by such serpentine careers that working-class girls turn to middle-class positions.[19]

School Performance, Differentiation, and Careers:

The development of school performance in relation to social back-

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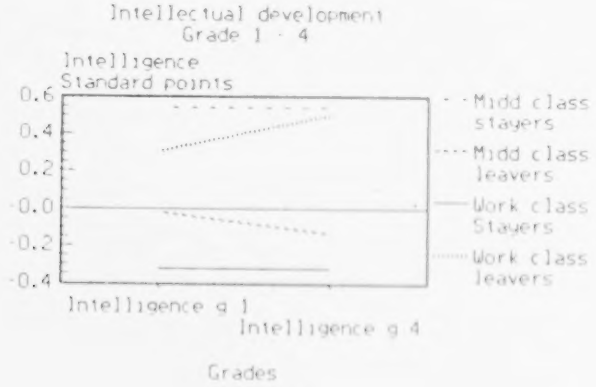
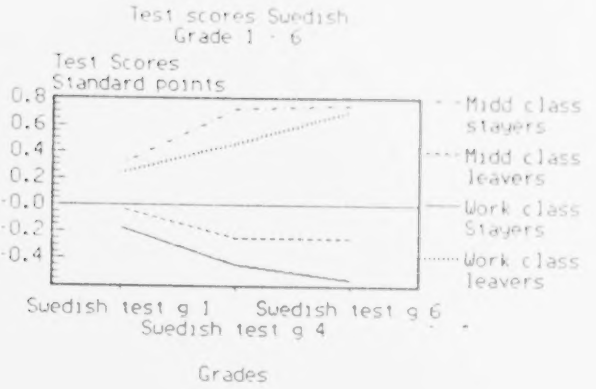
[17] When analysing information about the parents support to their children (e g concerning homework and interest in school activities) and the cultural situation in the homes (e g number of books, time spent for reading) it was found that there were differences between stayers and leavers among working class children as well as among middle class children. The working class leavers tend to be more similar to the middle class stayers than to the working class stayers - perhaps except the number of books at home and how much their parents talked with them about homeworks and school experiences.

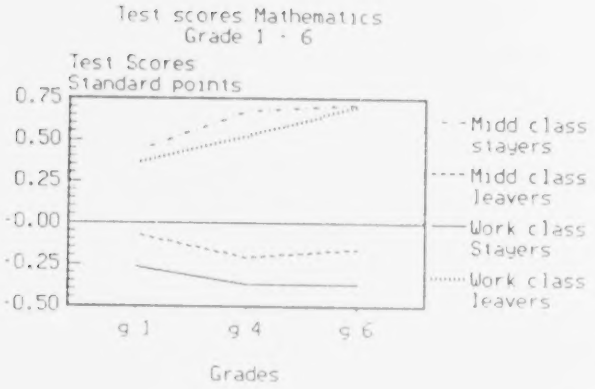
[18] Käller (1990) is considering the relations between career and gender in a recent study of this cohort.

[19] A discourse: A perhaps more surprising finding is that there is a greater tendency among immigrants to move into or to stay in the middle class compared with the non-immigrants with similar social background. More detailed analyses are carried through by Mardones Hernández (1990).

Diagram 1: Development of cognitive performances during the primary school related to social origin and career. Standardized means of scores for subgroups on intelligence tests and tests in Swedish and Mathematics.







ground and careers is presented in Diagram 1. There the information is transformed into standard scores. Thus, it is possible to consider the differentiation between subjects who later on will turn into different careers.

The information in Diagram 1 can be summarized as follows. First, differences in school performance (in Mathematics as well as in Swedish) increase during primary school. And second, the social background has an initial effect, which decreases when one compares children from different social backgrounds following similar careers. Concerning tests of intelligence, we find greater initial differences. What happens is that there is increased achievement by [illegible] class leavers and somewhat decreased achievement by the mid[illegible] leavers as a group.

The results were subjected to more detailed statistic[illegible] These are summarized in Table 2 and show the impac[illegible], school, and gender on the development of performance[illegible] of social background was small when careers were introd[illegible] only in scores on tests in Swedish that there is a signif[illegible] correlation with the background of the children. Gender was related to intelligence test scores. This is regarded as a result of the test construction in combination with the covariate construction, which is more verbally loaded. Gender works in different directions when considering test results in Swedish - where the female group had higher scores than the male group - and in mathematics, where the males performed better. Furthermore, the material sites of education

- the different schools - were related to performance as well - with the exception of test scores in Swedish.

Table 2: Results from covariance analyses on performances dependent on social background, career, gender and school and earlier performances. A summary. (n=655)

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES	DEPENDENT VARIABLES				
	DBA Grade 4	Mathematics Test grade 6	Mathematics Mark Grade 6	Swedish Test grade 6	Swedish Mark Grade 6
R-square for Model	.38 *	.40 *	.63 *	.39 *	.76 *
CLASSES:					
Social Background	-	-	-	* M > W	-
Career	* M > W	* M > W	* M > W	* M > W	* M > W
Gender	* m > f	* m > f	-	-	* f > m
School	*	*	*	*	-
INTERACTION:					
Background * Career	-	(*)	-	-	-
Background * Gender	-	-	-	-	-
Career * Gender	*	(*)	-	(*)	-
Backgrond * Career * Gender	-	-	-	-	-
COVARIATE:	Test grade 1	Test grade 1	Test Grade 6	Test grade 1	Test Grade 6

M = Middle Class W = Working Class m = male f = female
* = Significant at .01 level. (*) Significant at .05 level.

In the same table some interaction effects are shown concerning career in relation to gender when dealing with achievement on tests in Mathematics and in Swedish. This was interpreted as meaning that the differentiation process seems to work more strongly on boys than on girls.

Thus, in the primary school we can distinguish three processes (a) the division of pupils into different careers, where social background is an important determinant, (b) the homogenization of pupils in the same careers, but with different social background, and (c) the increased differentiation between pupils in different careers,

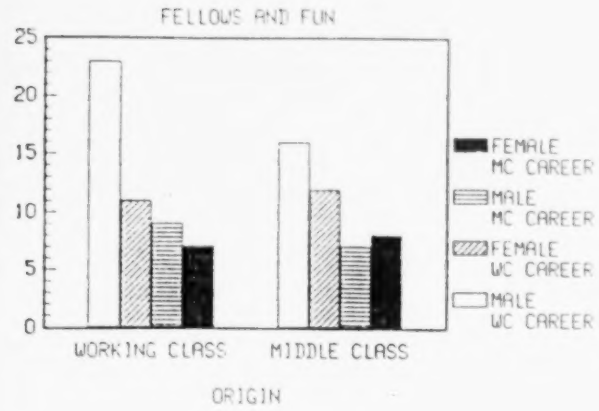
irrespective of social background.

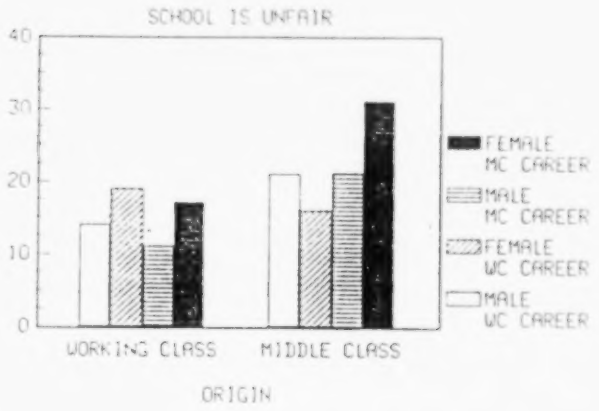
Perspectives on the schooling experiences:

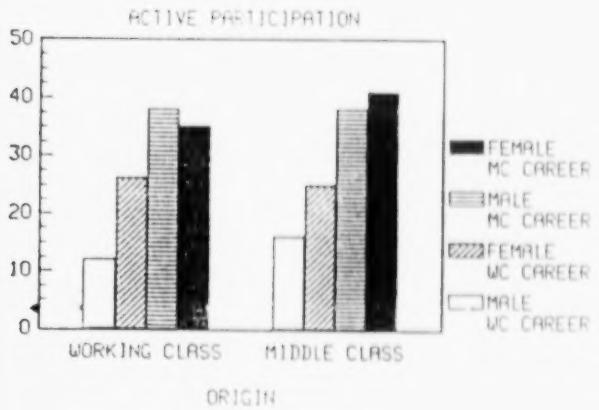
According to the different scales the results in Diagram 2 and Table 3 show the empirical relations between careers and conceptions of the school in retrospect. As could be expected there are some empirical links between social origin and perspectives on schooling. In general there is about one tenth that presents what can be regarded as a resistance attitude towards schooling. Such a perspective is more frequent among those who at present have a working-class position. The picture has many aspects, however. The main finding is the relation between careers and perspectives. Subjects in working-class careers - irrespective of social background - have a larger tendency to demonstrate aspects of a resistance perspective, especially as regards aspects of strategic behaviour, active participation in school and of the instrumentality of work - compared with middle-class careers made by working-class as well as middle-class children, who in turn seem to have a more school accepting attitude (see figure 1!). Referring to the aspect concerning the fairness of the school, the picture was different, however. No relation between career and perspective was found here - according to our results.

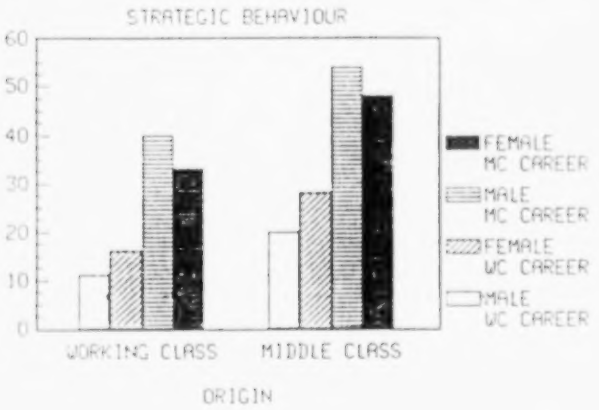
When considering the relations between gender and career to perspectives on schooling we have got a somewhat different picture. Stressing the school as a place for friends and fun is more frequent among males from working-class homes in working-class careers. A larger number of women than men point out the unfairness of the

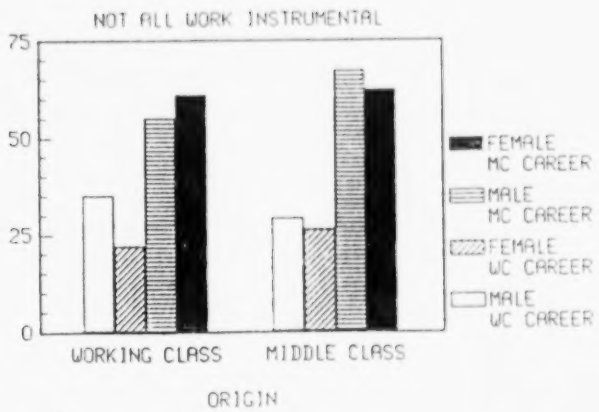
Diagram 2: Perspectives on schooling in retrospect related to social origin, Gender and Career. Percentage for each group in the direction of the scales used.











educational system, especially women from middle-class homes pursuing middle-class careers. Strategic behaviour and active participation seem to be linked to careers as well as conceptions of the instrumental value of work.

Table 3: Perspectives of schooling in retrospect related to social origins, career and gender. Percent in scales' directions.

ORIGIN	WORKING CLASS				MIDDLE CLASS			
CAREER	WORKING CLASS		MIDDLE CLASS		WORKING CLASS		MIDDLE CLASS	
GENDER	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE
Fellows and Fun	23	11	9	7	16	12	7	8
School is Unfair	14	19	11	17	21	16	21	31
Active Participation	12	26	38	35	16	25	38	41
Strategic behaviour	11	16	40	33	20	28	54	48
Not All Work Instrumental	35	22	55	61	29	26	67	62
NUMBER	95	108	47	54	80	69	107	111

CONCLUSIONS:

In this study we have dealt with the relations between social origin, gender, career, and education in the Swedish welfare state. We followed a cohort in a medium-sized town from the year they started school at the age of seven up to the age of twenty-three. During this stage of their life the educational system has played an important role, at least in quantitative terms; they have been students at least during nine to twelve of the sixteen years that have passed since they entered school.

In the empirical study the notion of career is limited in time. Much will happen after the age of 23 for this cohort. And since we are dealing with a specific place and period this will limit the possibilities of generalizing as well. A third limitation of the study is our very simple distinction in working class and middle class positions - something that has to be further developed later on.[20]

Our concept of career was based on class positions over time. We found that social background had a heavy impact on career. Two thirds of the working-class children remained in a working-class career and one third left their social origin and moved into a middle-class position. Two thirds of the middle-class children stayed in the middle-class. We made a distinction between direct careers (where the same career position was maintained) and serpentine careers (where the subject shifted class positions at least once during their career). It was found that working-class children were more frequently found in direct careers in comparison with middle-class children. This we think is a result of the more restricted conditions for working-class children. They cannot afford detours in their life trajectories to the same extent as middle-class children.[21] More serpentine careers were found among women than men - as could be suggested by the work of Elgqvist-Salzman (1900). This was due to the fact that women more seldom than men follow straight careers into

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[20] The simple distinction can be excused by the fact that we are studying changes in positions over time and that, for methodological reasons we had to make such a division.

[21] Gambetta (1987) discussed differences in restrictions between working-class and middle-class children in a similar way.

middle-class positions. One possible inference is that female career decisions are different from male careers in terms of "rationality" as well as in restrictions. Another conclusion might be that female careers are more dependent on other aspects of life in comparison with male careers.[22]

The concept of career is assumed to encapsulate the fact that education is related to circumstances external to school such as the labour market and the division of labour. Our subjects made their more visible careers after the primary school. But it seems reasonable to assume that the selections and choices made later on are prepared by e g the construction of the primary school and by the strategies and experiences on the part of the pupils before they are divided in secondary education and in the work structure.[23] Thus, it was found that later careers were to a high degree linked to the development of school performances already at the primary level. The differences between pupils pursuing middle-class careers and working-class careers increased from grade 1 to grade 6 in the primary school. During the same period the differences between children with different social origin decreased - if they were within the same career. E g the working-class leavers became more and more different from the working-class stayers and more similar to the middle-class stayers. Thus the impact of the social background was of limited

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[22] Käller (1990) has dealt with such issues more in detail. The reader is recommended to turn to her work for further penetration of the subject.

[23] This is a proposition that could be expected from different reproduction theories, e g the "correspondance theory" Bowles & Gintis (1976).

importance when the careers were defined. From such results and tendencies over time based on the notion of career, the educational system seems to have a greater impact than studies on the relation between origin and destiny have shown (eg Halsey, Heath & Ridge, 1980). Gender was related to the cognitive outcomes in a small but significant and traditional way - within the careers the girls improved more than the boys when considering language learning, while boys improved more when dealing with mathematics.

From the results concerning the development of cognitive performance we have shown the differentiating output of the primary school. This pedagogic differentiation may have many grounds, such as home cultures and family trajectories, pupils' and teachers' perspectives and strategies, the cultures of the schools etc. However, the actual interaction in schools inside and outside the teaching process must be of vital interest here. How does it come about that the differences in cognitive performances increase rather than decrease in a comprehensive school in the service of everybody? It can be argued here that within the frames and norms of teaching (cf Dahllof, 1971, Lundgren, 1972) a differentiating process occurs - a process that is functional in reference to the careers to be, but a process that certainly has many drawbacks for the individuals as well as for the society.

We have followed a process of education where the pupils seem to be put (or put themselves) on different tracks in school leading to different class positions. Social origin means a lot for this - but

once the pupils are (self)selected, other factors will increase their influence. Based on our findings we expect that typification of pupils in teaching in the comprehensive school (e g Woods, 1983) will play an important part here.[24]

When our subjects were 23 years old we studied their perspectives on schooling in retrospect. We found that there were relations between careers and perspectives. Those in working-class positions showed more tendencies towards a resistance perspective whereas those in middle-class careers tended to have more of a school-accepting paradigm. This was something that could be expected by Willis' (op cit) study. But when we used the subjects' social background as a point of departure, the empirical relations to the perspectives on schooling were weaker - the impact of origin is superceded by the impact of the careers the subjects have done.

It must be noted, however, that one aspect of these perspectives concerning "The Fairness of School" displayed rather weak relations with careers. Thus, a rather large share of the cohort accepted the school in this respect - though the school experiences and opportunities must have been quite different for those making different careers according to our other results. But according to the retrospective perspectives on schooling the careers into the social structure are conceived of as something due to their own ability or

[24] It must be stressed that the careers as such are not explained by such a typification. Basic are the distribution of positions in the social structure. Typification is rather an instrument among other in the preparation for the division of labour.

subculture or behaviour rather than the functioning of the school system in combination with the social structure of positions. Their career is regarded to be dependent on them and not on their circumstances. Such a conclusion is quite reasonable from studies on legitimation, class reproduction, and symbolic violence (e g Callewaert & Nilsson, 1980, Bordieu, 1977). But what complicates the picture is another fact - that females, especially middle-class stayers, were more hesitant about school in this respect. To a larger extent these women were critical of assumptions concerning the fairness of school.[25] Is this a result of the feminist movement during the last decade?

That this study deals with the meaning of schooling in retrospect is one of our points. However, it must be mentioned that this will tell us more about the present than the past. What is remembered from earlier experiences in our lives and how this is integrated in our present thinking is something that current psychological research on memory has difficulty in presenting substantial answers to (c f Neisser, 1982). Nevertheless, memory and experience are concepts that seem to be crucial if one is interested in education and life trajectories. Perhaps the way the historian E P Thompson (1978) uses the concept of experience might be fruitful. As human beings we can learn from experience as:

> ...mental and emotional responses whether of an individual or of a social group, to many inter-

[25] There is always a risk with ex post facto considerations of this kind. Nevertheless, we think this finding is worth reporting, as something to be dealt with in further investigations.

> related events or to many repetitions of the same kind of event. (a a, p 199)

Experiences give rise to questions and struggles and are developed into social consciousness. From this point of view, what we witness when we are studying perspectives on schooling in retrospect are our subjects' trials to structure and to construct a meaning to their present lives in connection with their earlier school experiences.[26]

What then is the impact of careers and perspectives on schooling for the school as a social institution. Following Meyer (1977), the issue of legitimation is vital here. In welfare-state education we have an integrated school system. This system works in a selective way - preparing and dividing the youth into different careers which are linked to the formation of the social structure - perhaps in a more meritocratic way compared with the former educational system. We have shown that such a division of labour is preceded by the pedagogical differentiation occurring at the primary level. The pupils use these experiences for their future career decision making and as an explanation of the selection that occurs. It seems quite reasonable to assume that the differentiation process in school will serve as an important basis for the social construction of identities and for

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[26] Bertaux (1981) deals with these issues. So does "The Popular Memory Group" (Johnson et al, 1982) in their argumentation about the social production of memory, i e "... the ways in which a sense of the past is constructed in the society" by means of public representations - of dominating as well as of oppositional character - and of private memory, which is influenced by the public. In our coming studies we will focus on such issues by means of qualitative analyses of the "life histories" of a sample of the subjects in the cohort we have been studying here.

cultural responses - in this cases mapped in terms of resistance and acceptance. We have found patterns of resistance linked with dominating legitimating conceptions of education. But there are other tendencies: Within a fixed number of different positions the sum of upward and downward careers must be equal. Thus, middle class leavers to a relatively little extent had an accepting perspective on schooling. And the working class leavers seemed to "forget" their cultural and social origin. Perhaps we will witness an irony of the welfare state here where those who have gained from the welfare policy e g by means of individual social mobility will tend to criticize demands for collective equality.

Finally, the implications of educational differentiation and careers ought to be discussed in a broader perspective. From an individual point of view it must be stressed that the young persons we have followed just are in the beginning of their working life careers. The newly graduated working class leavers have not yet - following Bourdieu (1986) - to a larger extent met the restrictions and difficulties one should expect later to occur if one consider the expected incongruens between habitus and habitat. Their "lack of social and cultural capital" in comparision with the middle class stayers will presumably have implication for their future careers, which we assume will question their social and cultural identity.[27]

And from a societal perspective the relations between careers and

[27] Our latest study (1989) consisting of long interviews with a small sample of subjects who have made different careers will put the light on such issues.

perspectives on schooling the question follows concerning the impact of education and social structure and the relations between different social classes and layers in the welfare society. While the relations between social origin and career show the implications of the social structure on schooling, the relations between career and perspective present the restructurating implications of schooling. The meaning of education in a welfare society can not been understood if not social (upwards and downwards) mobility is linked to issues concerning social and cultural identity.

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